The grass looked greener.


# THE SPECTATOR

HAMILTON COLLEGE

SERIAL SEVENTEEN HAMILTON COLLEGE, CLINTON, N.Y., MAY 19, 1964 NUMBER 24


# McEwen To Advise Trustees Of Student, Faculty Petitions

President Robert W. McEwen this week said that he has acknowledged receipt of two petitions protesting the proposed site of the Bristol Campus Center and will bring the matter to the attention of College trustees.

One petition was submitted by the Student Senate, the other by members of the faculty and staff.

"I thanked them for their concern and told them that I would express their concern to the Board of Trustees," he said. "I've always been in favor of freedom of opinion."

McEwen noted that the College has aimed at having working drawings and specifications ready so that contracts could be let early this summer and work could proceed at once.

He said the College hoped to have the building ready for occupancy by fall of 1965. It is known from past experience, he said, that such construction requires two summers and the intervening year.

The petition submitted by members of the faculty and staff, voicing disapproval of the east campus site, contained 50 signatures. Hamilton has a faculty of 78 on campus this semester.

The petition presented by the Student Senate was signed by 520 students. The enrollment is about 780. Following is the text of a letter to McEwen which accompanied the Senate's petition:

"The Student Senate strongly protests the present site of the proposed student center. We endorse and recommend the formation of an advisory board, consisting of members from the student body, the faculty, the administration, and the trustees, to consider where the proposed student center should be located.

"We, the Senate, believe that there still exist alternate sites which should be considered. We recommend the above mentioned advisory board be consulted as to these alternate sites and the internal structure of the building."

# *Pub Committee Reports Drop in 'Good Attitude'*

Jim Hildebrand, publican, told the students in a speech at chapel last Tuesday that "the good and positive attitude which characterized the opening of the pub" declined during the first two weeks of operation.

The pub was closed after damage and misbehavior on Saturday night, May 9, and was reopened on May 12.

Hildebrand said the pub was closed "not as a disciplinary measure because of minor damage resulting from individual misbehavior, but rather it was closed to give the students and the social committee time to consider how to correct the unfavorable atmosphere which had developed."

The decision to close the pub was made at a joint meeting of the Social Committee and the Judiciary Board.

Individual infractions of the rules were being handled by the Judiciary Board, he said.

According to Hildebrand, the pub was originally intended to be "a place where we (the students) could have conversations over a cold mug of beer, where professors and their wives could talk with students, and where we would like to take our dates on Friday and Saturday nights." Hildebrand offered several reasons why this function of the pub could not be realized during the later hours that it is open.

The Social Committee circulated a questionnaire on houseparties and the pub at the same chapel meeting. According to the committee, the results indicated that most students who handed in questionnaires go to the pub about two nights a week and plan to go more often in the future.

Students also indicated that they want an atmosphere "which is not boisterous and is devoid of obnoxious behavior."

# *Class and Charter Day Tomorrow*

Tomorrow's Class and Charter Day will include the morning convocation, the announcement of several student awards, and faculty and inter-class athletic contests.

All classes will be cancelled after 10 a.m., and the convocation will begin at 10:15. The main address will be delivered by Dr. Lionel Wyld, '49, a professor of English at the State University College of Education at Buffalo, who will speak on Samuel Hopkins Adams.

At the convocation, final Phi Beta Kappa selections will be announced; next year's Pentagon members will be tapped; and various awards, including five Greek, six essay, two philosophy, and two history prizes will be awarded to students.

Following the convocation will be a faculty-senior softball game. The fraternity houses have been requested to serve lunch at 12:30 so the afternoon inter-class athletic contests in tennis, golf, and softball can get started at 1:30 p.m. These contests will be in the form of a small tournament with the freshmen opposing the juniors and the sophomores facing the seniors in the first rounds, and the winners and losers of these contests meeting in second rounds to determine the order of finish.

Closing the day's activities will be the McKinney Prize Debate at 8 p.m. in the chapel. Taking the affirmative will be Stu Masters and Jack Zulack, and speaking for the negative will be Peter Livingston and Bob Collings. The topic to be argued is: Resolved, that senior study should be abolished. Prizes will be awarded to the two best individual speakers, not to the winning team.

# An Editorial

## THE PROBLEM

Although the trustees have considered and reconsidered the location of the Bristol Campus Center, students and faculty continue to object. Their opposition comes late, after decisions have been made and expensive planning is underway, and the opposition comes without a technologically-supported alternative proposal. But the opposition is widespread and voluble; it prompts us to make both specific and general observations.

## SPECIFICALLY

The College's list of reasons for the selection of the site, a statement which has been given to some students but which is not available for general publication in the *Spectator*, does not seem to be satisfactory. For example, included as "pro's" for the chosen Site 4 are: 600′ from North Dorm and the library, 1000′ from Dunham, 800′ from Sigma Phi, 2000′ from the projected women's college, and lack of interference with the view of the chapel.

We would expect to find, but do not find, these corresponding pro's for Site 6, near Emerson Hall: 300′ from South Dorm, 600′ from the library, 500′ from Dunham, 300′ from the pub (not to be in the center, according to present plans), 125′ from ELS, 600′ from Chi Psi, nearer to the women's college than Site 4, and no interference with the view of the chapel. This and other examples must cast doubt upon the adequacy of the report and the selection of Site 4.

If there is a review of the matter — and such would be an expensive, delaying procedure — we suggest serious consideration of Site 6. The owners of private land and buildings in that area, it is reported, might surrender the land and move the buildings for the center. And, to counter another objection to the site, we believe entrance to the women's college could be made further west on College Hill Road.

## GENERALLY

This entire controversy has painfully presented a far more fundamental problem than the selection of a site.

As President McEwen says, the trustees have every right to make their decisions without consulting students or professors. The trustees are eminent men whose own successes testify to their qualifications. Without pay and often without thanks, they devote themselves to study the College, and they hire specialists for expert advice. Many trustees are accustomed to the policy-making procedures of corporations, and would not expect nor especially enjoy open discussion of College policies. Understandably, then, the trustees have high confidence in their carefully-reached decisions.

Such a method may work well for a large institution; obviously it does not always succeed for a small college, or at least for this small college. Students and faculty are unhappy because they have been disregarded in a decision-making process which has reached a conclusion not to their liking. The trustees, we assume, will be unhappy because the results of their long studying and planning have met with disapproval. The administration, which does not make the basic decisions, is the unhappy receptor of much of the others' discontent.

We suggest, first of all, that if the students and faculty of the College are as talented as we lead ourselves to think, then they just might be able to make an occasional worthwhile contribution to College planning.

Secondly, students and faculty probably would feel better if their opinions were listened to and dismissed than if they were never heard at all. From a psychological vantage point, then, it would be wise to consult them.

Thirdly, for the same reason, it would be wise to keep them extremely well informed about the College's plans. Here the *Spectator* may share much of the blame; perhaps it is our fault that the decision about the site was not explained soon enough and fully enough. Yet, we must also point out that the College is somewhat less than liberal in the amount and the immediacy of its available information.

So, we recommend (1) a permanent group comprised of students, faculty, administrators, trustees, and alumni, who shall represent themselves to each other, and (2) a freer flow of information within the College community.

The College is in an era of many plans and many decisions. Unless we change procedures now, dissension will continue to threaten the success, not only of the planned changes, but of the extant community as well.

## OUR HOPE

We are reassured by the students, professors, administrators, trustees, and alumni who are acting so possessive about this somewhat vague thing called Hamilton College, for this can mean only that they *like* it, that they want it to be as good as possible.

What was to have been the center of the campus has become the center of controversy. But it can still become a center — a meeting place — for the College. All the College.

*—The Editorial Board*

## Top-Grade Sample

To the Editor:

Page 5 of your May 8th issue, "This Is the Year That Was," by Phil Webb, is a delightful piece of writing. It reminds me of the interesting style being used by the New York Herald Tribune.

This is a top-grade sample of participation in one of Hamilton's best extracurricular activities.

W. B. Eddy

(Mr. Eddy is an alumnus and trustee of the College. —Ed.)

## New Proposal

To the Editor:

We have all condemned the proposed location of the Bristol Campus Center. If our objections are to be heard, though, we must be constructive rather than destructive in our criticisms of the plans for the Center.

We must find, therefore, a new location for the Student Center that pleases both the aesthetic and the utilitarian. After a careful study of the suggested sites and of detailed maps of our campus, I believe a valuable site has been overlooked: the southeast corner of the football field.

Before someone condemns me for plotting to destroy our gridiron, however, let us look at a redesign of the building and at this location.

The location I recommend is on the plot of land at the northwest corner of the parking lot in back of the library; the building extends 190 feet to the west and 125 feet north without grazing the track or the football field. With the 70 foot tower resting squarely on the underground basement, 25 feet lies between the building above ground and the outside edge of the track.

The site would become more appealing and sensible to us if we were to redesign the building. One of the most absurd proposals for this building is the outdoor cafe. With the snow and cold of winter, the cafe would not be usable eight months of the year. The outdoor cafe is, in short, a fine idea for a southern city; it is ridiculous here at Hamilton.

With the elimination of the cafe, the arcade could be attached, much as a skirt, to the base of the tower. I would thereby shorten the dimensions of the visible part of the building, and bring it more in keeping with the size of the other buildings on the campus. The building would still be more than ten feet away from the outside rim of the track.

In defending my proposed location for the building, I shall follow the guidelines the Trustees used to determine their site.

1. The east end of the football field is in the normal pattern of student travel. It is less than 400 feet from Soper Commons, the Library, and the Gymnasium, which are the three most utilized buildings on the campus. It is closer (but only by several feet) to the proposed girls' school than the Trustees' present site. Its proximity to the gym would allow its bowling alleys to be used in the physical education program. Convenient to the football field, it is easily accessible by large crowds at football games.
2. The land can easily be leveled and, as it is adjacent to the football field with its built-in drainage system, we can eliminate our problems about water.
3. Adequate room for cars is available with the existing parking lots to the rear of the Library and of Dunham.
4. Utilities are also convenient. Gas and water connections lie within sixty feet of the site and primary electric lines exist less than two hundred feet away.
5. Modifying slightly the road around Dunham, the delivery dock for the building can be conveniently placed to the west. Little screening will be needed to hide it. With Dunham Dormitory to the south, ugliness is relative.
6. If the building ever had to be expanded, the nearest obstacle, the second green, lies two hundred feet west of the basement of the building.
7. Placed on this site, the building will have a better chance to blend in with the campus than it will elsewhere. To the east, the northern edge of the tower will be about parallel to the wall of Chemistry and west of it by 100 feet. Dunham Dormitory will be sixty feet to the south. To the north and west, the tower is unchallenged.

The major disadvantage to this site is the destruction of fifty yards of track used only in the 220 yard dash. Land is available, however, to the west of the straightaway of the track. Twenty pine trees are the only obstacle. Shallow rooted, they offer no challenge to the tree-mover. They can easily be moved westward by 50 yards.

Seven other trees lie on this site, but offer us no challenge either. As they are but mere seedlings, they can be replanted in front of Dunham.

If one objects to the cost of the rebuilding of 50 yards of track and the replanting of 20 pines and 7 young oaks, let us remember that we have moved houses and built and torn up parking lots within less than a year.

With a good job of surveying, the site has many advantages and few, if any, serious drawbacks. I cannot understand why it has not been studied before this date. With the information I have at my disposal, I strongly recommend that the Trustees consider the southeast corner of the football field as the location of the Bristol Campus Center.

Jeffrey D. Buchanan, '65

## Well?

To the Editor:

If students are really concerned about the beauty of the campus, why don't they turn their attention to a situation which they can do something about?

I am speaking about the way many students litter the campus with cans and paper, and the way they thoughtlessly tramp on the freshly-seeded patches of ground in the campus lawns.

Well?

*(Name withheld by request)*

## Reconsider

To the Editor,

I hate to embark on a scathing criticism of the student center for fear that the administration will feel that the students do not appreciate the pub project. I suggest, however, that the pub was an overwhelming success because the students were consulted.

The abundance of student sidewalk superintendents who participated in the venture showed an unparalleled campus enthusiasm. The students identified their own interests with the pub, and even contributed funds to expedite its construction.

Last year, questionnaires were distributed and student opinion was solicited for the proposed student center. Enthusiasm ran high as the students identified their own interests with the project. To say that this initial enthusiasm has vanished would be an understatement. The plan to locate this "monument" on the East Campus has evoked student opposition to a project designed to make them happy. In view of this opposition, Mr. Bristol, and the trustees should reconsider the venture once again.

Enough has been said in the recent letters to the editor about personal objections to the site and design of the Bristol Campus Center. My purpose is to criticize the plan from an architectural point of view.

Anyone who has toured the Hill would agree that Hamilton has a first rate campus. In fact, I would even suggest that it is sometimes a deciding factor in one's choice of a college. We know that we have a beautiful campus, but many do not realize what makes it so. If one were to use one word to explain why our campus is aesthetically pleasing, it would be harmony.

If one were to walk around the quad and examine the architecture, he would not, with the possible exception of the Chapel, find any buildings with unusual architectural claim to fame. There are no architectural monuments on the campus which interrupt one's eye as it travels from building to building. Looking at the campus, one sees it as a whole, and the effect is pleasing, to say the least.

# Letters to

The line of buildings from South to Sig works as an architectural unit. Who could question that the trees on the East Campus should not be cut down? But there is a further important consideration. The trees on the campus, in addition to their intrinsic beauty, are an integral part of the architectural transition between different building styles.

Hamilton is not unique in this respect. There are many cities which depend on an architectural ensemble for their beauty. Edinborough is an excellent example. Vernacular architecture does not have to be beautiful or monumental if it is planned with overall harmony in mind. What would happen to Salisbury Cathedral if a supermarket were erected on its side lawn?

I believe that the design of a building should show what it is used for. The present design for the Bristol Center suggests a memorial rather than a recreation center. It suggests a mausoleum, complete with a symbolic arcade and a phallic center section. This design is a violation of the sensible architectural approach of any century, not just a personal opinion.

The way in which the design was conceived goes against any sound architectural procedure. The architect designed a monumental exterior and then tried to fit the proposed functions in the interior.

Even the exterior doesn't work. It is hard to believe that Architect Stone could have planned a long colonnade with a flat roof for this climate. Witness the number of times the janitors have to shovel off the flat roofs over the Dunham lounges. This design may function in a temperate climate, but not here.

The most important thing to remember about the present design is that it is monumental. It will not, and cannot, blend with our existing campus. As one comes up the college hill, it will not be the line of buildings around the Chapel which he will be conscious of, it will be the Bristol Mausoleum. Which is better?

The trustees, however, argue that this is the only place the building would fit. They are absolutely right. Where else is there enough room for this airplane terminal-type structure? What the trustees fail to realize is that it's not only the site which is at fault, it is also the design.

Is a student center a sacred project? In the short run, the college seems to be elevating the dollar to an overly important position. They are afraid to make any suggestions to the donor. The result is that the college is stuck with a permanent architectural eye-sore which cannot be hidden. Architecture is permanent. I suggest, therefore, that the trustees carefully examine their plan. The Student Center cannot be torn down (like the ill-fated parking lot) when they realize that it is not just what they wanted.

Is student opinion worth anything at Hamilton? Who is the Student Center for — Mr. Bristol or the students? I do not know Mr. Bristol personally, but I am sure he would be disappointed if his donation resulted in something which disturbed the beauty of the campus and disappointed the students.

A well-designed building in the Root Farm area could add rather than detract from the campus' present beauty. To those who argue that it would destroy the natural entrance for the future girl's school, I say nonsense. Only in its present rambling form could it block the entrance.

I urge the trustees to re-design it and make it something worthwhile if they are going to spend such a large sum of money. If Stone cannot preserve the architectural beauty of our campus, the trustees should shop around and find someone who can. Above all, the trustees should value student opinion because they are the people who will have to use it.

I hope that the trustees will realize that although many experts have worked on this project, this does not insure its success. There are many experts in the Ford Motor Company, but remember the Edsel.

*Dick Dobbs '64*

## Note of Discord

To the Editor:

During this exceptionally beautiful spring there is an ironic note of discord on the Hill. A building that has long been needed on campus is now given by a family of generous donors whose devotion to the College extends back to the eighteenth century. We should, surely, be rejoicing this spring that Hamilton is at last to have a student center.

Instead of rejoicing, however, there is criticism, dissension, and even bitterness. From many sides, from alumni and friends of the College, from faculty and from students, I hear cries of dismay that with the addition of the Bristol Campus Center on the site proposed we shall lose a part of the campus which is most beloved.

Must there be discord? Must the Eastern Campus Park with its trees of age and beauty and its view of the Valley of the Oriskany be sacrificed? Is it not possible that the Trustees might reconsider their decision of Apr. 18?

I would be faithless to three generations of Roots, Curators of the campus grounds, if I did not pose this inquiry.

Grace Root
(Mrs. Edward W. Root)

## Strange Values

To the Editor:

At least some of us at the College are disappointed about the uproar over the location of the student union. Not because we don't have any interest in the matter, for we do.

But we are disappointed that such a parochial matter should elicit such interest when far more important social, political, moral, and other problems receive barely a flutter of a response. 'Tis a strange sense of values.

(Name withheld by request)

To the Editor:

**Prufrock Dares**

How fortunate indeed that there is time
To safely sublimate our moral sense,
When periodic building is begun
At venerable, quaint, dear Hamilton.

And indeed it is worth it after all,
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,
To protest the building-site of Bristol,
Worth it to have pulled together, chin-up
And all that,
To have swelled a progress,
Started a scene or two.

In the room the women come and go,
Talking of the Dunham fiasco.
But at my back from time to time I sense
The Negro's grim contempt toward vicious
cant and proud indifference.

And wouldn't it have been worth it, after all,
Wouldn't it have been worth while,
After the silly Chapel protest, so jejune,
After the novels, after the teacups,
To have simply sent the students home,
And left us snugly here alone,
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—

*Rocco R. Fazio*
*Instructor in English*

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# the Editor

## Powerful Yardstick

To the Editor:

Concerning the Bristol Campus Center, I would like to urge anyone interested in the matter of proposed sites to visit the Development Office located under South Lounge. There one may look at *The Site Selection for Bristol Campus Center.*

Among the considerations listed for the present site are such facts as "Near Root Art Center" and "In center of student traffic flow down the hill to fraternities." The only reasons listed against the proposed site are these: "Some loss of trees—6 or 8. Slight interference of view of valley from South Dormitory."

It is gratifying to learn that the yardstick has such powers over nature!

*Charles Bauer* '65

## The Spoilers

To the Editor:

It may well be that long-range College planning is not really within the province of faculty and students. No sensible person, however, would maintain that suggestions from these groups are of dubious value.

I refuse to believe that, as one members of the administration has suggested, the "uninformed" opinion of the entire faculty and student body in the matter of the campus center site "isn't worth the powder to blow it up."

In a time that has witnessed such landmarks in planning as Dunham Dormitory and the parking lot behind Sig, it would seem that the administration could use all the outside help in planning that it can possibly lays its hands on.

Further, contrary to what I'm afraid is popular belief, the trustees do not own the College. According to law, they look after its administration for the State of New York and are supposed to act in the best interests of the College. Are the best interests of the College served when an action is being taken which is repugnant to at least half the faculty and three-fourths of the student body?

Those who oppose construction on the east campus have been criticized for rushing into battle without any technical information and for failure to suggest a feasible alternative to building on the proposed site. But the critics argue only with dollar signs and decimal points, with "time factors' and a heart-felt "Let's be practical, now."

In the first place, it is ludicrous to apply arguments stressing time and money to the controversy over the east campus site. Intangibles like the view of the east lawn just don't lend themselves to monetary valuation. And you can't buy 70-year-old trees from a mail-order catalog.

Moreover, those who oppose building on the east campus have **not** failed to present a reasonable alternative. If modifications in plans for the building were made, the campus center could be built on Site 6. And property owners in that area are reportedly willing to move buildings and donate land to allow for construction.

Where does one look for a serious justification for building on Site 4 (the east campus)? Certainly not at the report of pros and cons published by the College. To say that the report appears contrived is sheer understatement. One can only wonder why so many of the "pros" that are applicable to Site 6 as well were only applied to Site 4.

The original decision to build on Site 4 was made by the trustees . . . none of the "credit" can be given to the administration. But the opposition which has arisen since then has either been steam-rolled, or else recognized but not really taken seriously. (And they're still rollin.)

Avoid controversy in print, and for God's sake, don't get the alumni all stirred up about this thing?

Nonsense. To proceed according to plan in the face of strong opposition and the existence of a reasonable alternative would be true madness.

Before the spoilers come to defile the greensward with their gold-plated shovels, the trustees should take another look — a long careful look — at Site 6.

James R. Stear, '66

## The Call

To the Editor:

Haaaaaaaaa -lllllllll- v- oooooh!

*(Name withheld by request)*

## Sports Facilities

To the Editor:

Last Tuesday in chapel Sam Weir said that we should swim to shore and quack like Hell. So I've decided to start quacking. I must admit that it was not so much Sam's cry from the darkness as conversation with Gene Long that has prompted me to write this letter. Well, Mr. Long, you said I should write to the *Spectator,* so here it is.

In an interview in Public Speaking class Mr. Wertimer said that he thought that the facilities here at Hamilton in the area of sports were quite good. He said that all the College could do was to set up the archery targets—it could not grab us by the ear, drag us out to the archery range, and force us to use the facilities.

He, of course, was speaking figuratively, because as far as I know Hamilton doesn't have an archery range. I guess what he was trying to say was that all the college could do was to provide the facilities; it is up to the students to use them.

Let's take a critical look at some of the facilities that are offered. There is the gym for basketball. Now the gym is very nice, but the balls they leave out for us aren't, most of them, even round.

Most of them are cracked and split and/or too soft. Let's now proceed to the swimming pool. During the non-swimming season it is open for two hours a day—from 4 to 6. I hardly call this making the pool available, or it is at most a minimal effort. These hours may not be convenient to some people, who therefore are prevented from swimming.

Last Tuesday I wanted to play badminton to try to sharpen up a little for the intramural matches. First I saw Mrs. van Slyke and no equipment was given out except for the intramural matches. How is one supposed to practice for these matches? It is pretty difficult to do with no equipment. I finally was able to get the necessary two racquets and bird. I then proceeded to the badminton and golf room, which was conveniently locked; then back to Mrs. van Slyke, who said she couldn't open it and who directed me to Lyle. Lyle said that I'd have to get one of the coaches to open it. Needless to say none of the coaches happened to be around the gym right at that moment.

Admittedly, the picture I have painted is all black, which isn't the whole case. But, the purpose of this letter is not to evaluate the facilities available here, but to point out a few areas where their availability is lacking. True, the College can't force us to use the faciliites, but it can make sure that the facilities it does give us are truly available and in good shape.

*Michael B. Evans,* '66

## Compulsory Chapel

To the Editor:

The numerous opinions concerning compulsory Chapel have been heard and evaluated. Students and faculty alike have voiced their stands on this controversial subject, and we are tired of hearing about this now over-worked controversy. A decision has been reached and we still have compulsory Chapel.

Much to my surprise, however, from the numerous editorials which have appeared in the *Spectator,* I have not read any which questioned the moral and ethical worth of the compulsory Chapel system which did, and still does exist. In reaching a decision which is still highly contested by, I believe, a majority of my classmates, some members of the faculty have without deviation remained dead-straight on the path of tradition.

I ask these people if they think this path of traditional Chapel worship which they blindly adhere to, exists along side a compatible atmosphere of ethical and moral virtue? There should certainly be a correlation between worship in a Chapel service and "Know Thyself."

The failure of the trustees to change tradition by becoming more flexible — for numerous changes of Hamilton's social and religious mores over the past 150 years have shown flexibility —has led to a decay in the ethical worth of the system and thus the real meaning behind going to Chapel has been lost.

I feel that the faculty, in reaching its recent decision, is ruining the Hamilton ideal of Honor in this particular area which probably did exist in past generations and still might today flourish if perhaps the Hamilton student was not compelled to show the Dean that he went to a House of Worship each Sunday.

Take Christian Nosinner, for example, the average Hamilton student, who turns in a card to the Dean's office saying that he was unable to attend Sunday evening Chapel on the Hill with his fellow do-gooder, give-me-a-pink-card friends because he was on a weekend at Wells College. Out late Saturday night, he did not fail to think of his college first, as any Hamilton man does, and he and his date rose and shined early in the stormy ten degree weather Sunday morning to trudge down to the nearest church in Aurora to worship.

On Monday morning he goes into the Dean's office and fills out a chapel card saying that he went to a church service at the First Northampton Calvary Synagogue. The Dean thanks Christian for his obedience to the system by not giving him a chapel cut, and Christian's heart is warmed for being so honest with himself and with the Dean.

What is the worth of a system where honor and honesty is condoned? Indeed, from a student's point of view who does not agree with the requirement, it is much easier to lie and have your girl mail you a chapel program which the Dean will accept on your "honor" than to be compelled to attend chapel senior year or have your diploma withheld at graduation. Such practices exist! Is this what the College had in mind when it set up the rule?

I think that the trustees should understand what goes on, not in theory, but in practice at Hamilton College in relation to the religious chapel requirement, and then realize that a change should be made. I see no moral virtue, no "Know Thyself," in a system which is easy to beat and which the honorable Hamilton student takes pride in beating!

Was it the intent of the "Old Order" to put dishonesty on the same level with compulsion? Preserving Hamilton's name of Honor, which indeed it has, seems to me more important than adhering to the well-travelled path of tradition.

*Lawrence Pritchard,* '66

## On Birns: I

To the Editor:

Is Hamilton College a lousy, crummy place? The assertion that it is has struck at our pride, that most adamant emotion which so often obstructs constructive self-criticism and forbids us to ask the essential questions, such as those raised on these pages last week by Professor Birns.

His honest criticisms have provoked the answer that, of course, as anyone knows, Hamilton is a first, rather than a fourth rate institution, as well as thoughtless commentaries on the professor and his ideas which were couched in terms far more vulgar and inane than "lousy," "crummy," and "rubbish."

We are asked to give a care about the desecration of the East campus, and evidently we do care, but why do we waste our time and energies on an issue as insignificant in comparison to the great struggles of the world as is the location of the campus center?

We care more for our own problems, which are blessed few, than for the tremendous troubles of mankind. Our pet grievance, compulsory chapel, has raised more ire on this hill than have civil rights, birth control, Communism, and apartheid combined.

What are the concerns of the "Hamilton Man," that mentally sterile ideal to which we conform? Before asking what we can do for our country or our college we say, "Give me a pub, a campus center, free Sunday evenings, more social weekends, scholarships, vacations, and finally a job and a niche in the secure and sacred fabric of society."

Who will we remember from this year, which, we are reminded, was unquestionably great?—Joe Williams? The Isley Brothers? The Bluebells, who appealed to our instincts more effectively than could Sir Julian Huxley? If our sense of concern were oriented less to our own "needs" and discomforts, we would remember Messrs. Hassan, Bemis, Leddihn, Boudin, and Kirk—men who cared, but who probably left this hill impressed more with our pettiness than with our trees and halls.

I am not praising or passing judgment on Prof. Birns' political posture, which may be controversial. I quack generally from the right side of the pond and do not write off as specious the cases for tradition and compulsory chapel. Yet I say we should all quack from wherever we are in the pond of opinions and maybe swim around a bit.

The chapel issue, which I hope will remain as lively next year as it was this year, can be the point of departure, our first issue, from which we can move on to the "survival issues" of the world. Will there be a revolution in our generation?

Is our rallying cry to be "I want to hold your hand" or "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country?" The answer to the charge that our college is lousy and crummy is not smug self-assurance that we are first-rate, or the hill-dwellers' implacable mania for isolation which November 22 only briefly cured, but the answer that Prof. Birns began to give: Care, question, and quack more often.

*Rick Watson* '67

To the Editor:

From the sunless sea beneath
my pleasure-dome at Xanadu

Quack!

Alas, anon.

Mock on, mock on, I swear it's so;
Mock on, mock on; 'tis all in vain!
We throw the sand against the wind,
And the wind blows it back again;

'Though every sand becomes the Glen
(Hidden in Academe's behind),
Blown back. Away! Blind the shocked eye!
Lie still in Stone's path through pine!

We atoms of Democracy
And Sammy's particles of light
Are sands upon the 'Risk'ney shore,
Where Bristol's tent doth shine so bright.

Not anon, alas.
*R. Scott Warthin* '65

### QUOTATIONS FOR THE WEEK

Resolved that Mr. Williams, Mr. Gridley, and Mr. Bristol be a committee to ornament the College yard by planting forest and other trees and shrubbery at a suitable season of the year, at an expense not exceeding $50.

—*Proceeding of the Trustees,* 1828
*A Documentary History of Hamilton College*

No house should be *on* any hill or on anything. It should be *of* the hill, belonging to it, so hill and house could live happy together each the happier for the other.

—Frank Lloyd Wright, *Autobiography*

# Letters to the Editor

## On Birns: II

To the Editor:

As Mr. Birns addressed his letter (*Spectator*, May 8) to "the good deans and the editor of the *Review*," I will not presume to answer those of his letter's charges which seem genuinely directed at the deans and the editor of the *Alumni Review:* I do not wish to defend the administration's stand on chapel attendance, and I am as anxious as Mr. Birns to hear Mr. Wertimer's reasons for the lack of Negroes in Hamilton's faculty and in its maintenance crew.

However, in his enthusiasm, Mr. Birns extended his criticism to include Hamilton's graduates, its students, and the quality of the education which Hamilton provides for its students. As a Hamilton student (off and on since 1959) about to graduate, I am somewhat qualified to answer these "peripheral" criticisms.

The first answer to be made to Mr. Birns' charge that Hamilton graduates are "launched into the corridors of corporations and to the sodden verities" — that is, the first answer once one has made sense out of a charge rendered almost nonsensical by its grammar (How can one be launched both "into . . . corridors" and "to sodden verities"?)—is that such a charge is simply not true.

Sixty-five to seventy per cent of Hamilton's graduates go on to graduate school. When these students leave graduate school they are no more the products of Hamilton College than they are the products of their graduate schools, or, for that matter, no more than they are the products of the schools they attended before coming to Hamilton. If, then, after leaving graduate school, these men still choose to enter corporations and country clubs, the fault—if indeed it is a fault—cannot be laid to Hamilton.

Mr. Birns further states that "Hamilton's best graduates almost universally despise it." Assuming that Mr. Birns means the depised "it" to refer to Hamilton, although there is no grammatical reason for making such an assumption, I must ask Mr. Birns just whom he considers Hamilton's best graduates? If, as he suggests in his letter, he means by "best" those graduates who, in spite of Hamilton's launching, do "face up to the survival issues of this generation," I say to this charge that it also is not true.

Mr. Birns will agree that those members of the classes of '63 and '64 who have entered the Peace Corps are attempting to face up to survival issues, that Robert Moses, who began and heads SNCC, is making the same attempt. I have talked to most of these, "Hamilton's best graduates," and not one, to my knowledge, despises Hamilton. I do know students and graduates who despise Hamilton, and they are not usually those who quietly "face up to the survival issues of this generation," but rather those who can be found at any time ranting outrageously against anything which they can label an "institution."

Of the Hamilton student Mr. Birns says "they all quack from the middle of the pond;" and that the student's ideal "is the man who 'plays it cool'." Let us assume for a minute that in these statements Mr. Birns has defined the attitude of the typical Hamilton student; what does Mr. Birns offer as an alternative? Since he does not in his letter explicitly state what a Hamilton student's behavior or his ideal should be, one must assume that Mr. Birns is offering his own behavior as correct, and himself as an ideal.

His behavior, at least as it is expressed in this letter, is to attack a problem with the hope of offending as many people as possible; it is to style one's attack, first, after the New York *Daily News*, where one finds such name-calling as "white-buck-shoe patronization," "rubbish," "fourth rate," "dingle-dongle," "rabble," and "just another lousy, crummy place;" it is to style one's attack secondly after *Mad Magazine*, where one finds such delicious ironies as "some college worthies," "institutions that, for certain purposes, this institution likes to classify itself with," "falling all over themselves to come up with buddy-votes;" it is to always impute to one's opponents the worst motives ("casuistical dingle-dongle") and to insist that his opposition is hypocritical ("Mr. Wertimer took delight in believing"); and it is above all to be so confused about what one is trying to say that one assigns to the same clause two contradictory and nonsensical subjects ("I suggest that the administration and faculty . . . we quickly dispatch. . .")

So far I have assumed that Mr. Birns' assessment of the Hamilton student's attitude is accurate; now I would like to suggest that what appears to Mr. Birns to be "playing it cool" is in actuality the exercising of responsibility and judgment, two unexciting virtues that always irritate the immature and the enthusiastic.

Before sounding off, the Hamilton student, insofar as he reflects his education, considers his responsibility to the institution which he is criticizing; he does not let his grievances blind him to his obligations. When such a student, conscious of his obligations, criticizes, he does it with the intention to correct, not just to antagonize; and he has the judgment to phrase his criticism in reasonable argument rather than unsupported name-calling.

Lastly, as to the quality of the education which Hamilton provides for its students: If the institution which Mr. Birns calls "just another lousy, crummy place" successfully teaches its students responsibility and judgment and never teaches them one jot of enthusiasm, it is more than a "mediocre" college — it is a "'solid' institution" in the best sense of the word.

Enthusiasm has always existed, usually without and sometimes in spite of education. Responsibility and judgment cannot destroy such enthusiasm when it joins the Peace Corps or builds a United Nations; they may be able to destroy it when it burns six million Jews or when it writes petulant, unintelligent letters to newspapers. And Hamilton's best graduates will always be able to judge between the one enthusiasm and the other.

*P. Stellato, '64*

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## By Birns

To the Editor:

The question seems not whether we are moldering but whether it is occurring slowly or apace. I have suggested that the debate on compulsory chapel has been riven by humbug. May I example this by citing the words of Dean Tolles.

According to his light the compulsory chapel requirement is "reasonable because it is announced to the entering students in advance and represents part of a contract which they make with the College." In any event, liberation for dissidents is always near at hand, for the student is completely "free to transfer elsewhere."

Leave aside the accusation that might be made by a more severe critic than myself that this is a rather curious Draconic remedy for merely asserting the traditional American assumption that a man's beliefs, or lack of them, are privileged and that his intellectual or philosophical integrity needn't be subject to "a small amount of challenge."

The Dean seems to assume that a belief in God is self-evidently the correct stance and that variants should be willing to submit themselves to a mere "ten hours a semester" of religious attendance" — prithee, why not equal time for a compulsory exposure to atheism, agnosticism, or that kindly god, Priapus? And ten hours of compulsory exposure is not as burdensome a compromise of principle as a more protracted period of time would be. *Rilievo!* You cannot say that we are not gentlemen.

Dean Tolles' tragic error is that he considers compulsory chapel just another "requirement" and that non-compliance means "contract" breaking. But what kind of "contract" do we have here? Is the model the kind of contract that corporations enter into prior to production or collusion, or price-fixing? Or would it not be proper to take seriously the word *collegium*: a society of students and scholars (ah yes, and administrators, trustees, and Building and Grounds).

Would it be too tortured a simile to strike to say that there is little quantitive difference between his interpretation of the sanctity of "what is" and that of the Georgian county politician who pleads the reasonable option that if the "g... d.... niggers don't dig the g... d....Jim Crow laws of Georgia, let them go to the g... d.... North." And the British could claim comparable grievances against the newcomer Tom Paine! What right did Al Smith have to struggle for reform when he knew what the law of New York State was before he left Ireland? What is, should be, last year, this year, and the next.

But Dean Tolles' reasoning is high minded when contrasted with the apologies of some of his colleagues. Abolish compulsory chapel? Well what about those two hundred thousand dollars we spent on renovating the building? Let's wait until the co-ordinate college is founded, then the girls — knowing how Hamilton-type girls will be — will voluntarily fill the vacant pews and we won't be embarrassed. So go the cogitations of purported intellectuals.

Let's teach about and revel in the glories of the dissenters like Brahe, Galileo, and Bruno, but let us not at all encourage this kind of nonsense around here. Savage wit forever! But a quince of intellectual vigor — the day after tomorrow. This just doesn't seem to be a very important issue to many — but to save the grass? Ah, *aux armes!*

*Mirabile dictu!* At nearby Hobart — an officially Episcopalian-related institution (in contrast to our non-sectarian Scottish Presbyterian one) — the faculty several weeks ago voted *unanimously* to abolish compulsory chapel. The issue was championed by Chaplain Johnson of that college (a man willing to preside over the liquidation of his own enforced empire?), who maintained that he wanted more religion rather than less. He would not permit the continuation of the "punching-in with God system." Avaunt! Let us hasten a salvation corps to Geneva to regenerate those moral lepers.

I believe that the chapel issue exposes only one of the many faces of Hamilton's commitment to mediocrity. Recently Wittenberg University in Ohio announced the appointment of a Long Range Study Committee to "review the curriculum of the university and to re-examine the institution's basic philosophy of higher education." Wittenberg's Committee selected ten colleges "from across the country, institutions which the Committee feels are alive and moving, and whose programs and thinking would be of great help." For even a moment, can any of us imagine that Hamilton College appeared on the list, even as an alternate?

To continue my case, the Admission's office records that they have enrolled "one American Negro" for next year's class. If that one "American Negro" wants to know something about *Hamilton College and Her Family Lines* let him go to the Admissions office and he will find a handsome blue and gold edition of an oversized book, bearing that title, prominently displayed in the waiting room. Parents of prospective students! Make no mistakes that we are deeply concerned with the problems of the role of the small college and what is its road of excellence!

Why mess around with Meiklejohn, Kingsman Brewster, and Dewey, when we can reveal to you some rather interesting charts that describe the genealogy of some founding families who distinguished themselves by attending this institution?

Other institutions might find it more seemly to place this variety of vanity press publication in its treasure room. But first things first! All this and ten miles away sit 25 B-52 G's — each with 50 megatons of destructive capability in its belly. Antiquarians, for your sake, I pray that the covers of that book are well leaded. One has to surmise that the attitude that displays such a book in such a place has to be coupled with the fact that Hamilton College recruits one American Negro in this year of the second American Revolution.

If the faculty is of two minds about the chapel issue, the business office seems to be operating as an efficient team. The Vice-President modestly dismisses his own competence by indicating in the *Spectator* that the "basic budget is 'built in' by the College's program." With well justified pride he notes that "we have a very conservatice program here. In the last 15 years, we have gone into the red only twice."

Clearly here is the seat of administration wisdom. Not to cavil over the business office's notable achievements, but further economies could be achieved if the College, a la Zulieka Dobson, rid itself of those excresences — students and teachers. For instance, giving credence to rumor, if the business office had allocated the $15,000 it spent unrolling the parking lot, and the $15,000 it again spent in wrapping it up — all part of the visionary master plan" controlling the College's growth, we might be able to breed an instinct for greatness which could carry the business office along with it. It isn't a notable achievement being in the red only twice if the net operation wasn't of any account.

Colby College mortgaged itself up to $5,000,000 in order to build the Mayflower Hill campus and plan a sweeping program that scrutinized all of the delineations of an education for a modern society. Some of the most notable institutions in this country proudly enter into deficit years in order to generate programs that justify their existences.

Foundations and private individuals can be excited by bold new programs that react to the stimuli that each passing decade produces. If we had just one reed of that bundle of money that was "allocated" to playing around with that parking lot, we could have converted this winter camp into a garden of energy—conferences, stimulating speakers (not hacks on the "tour" cycle), student trips to activities on other campuses, a citizenship center, great "personalities" in residence, *ad hoc* publications, a multiplying of student organizations.

What this institution needs, and ever so badly, is an awareness that the nature of the College as a corporate entity makes the largest contribution to the quality of our product and that this just doesn't happen, but perforce is the resultant of one damn good plan after another . . . and the exercise of energy . . . and wisdom.

We have to run scared; there are good grounds for us to do so. Rather than taking pride in the number of our graduates who enter graduate school, we must ask what is the nature of the message that they bear. And pity the poor public relations office. What is it for them to tell the world about Hamilton, aside from the announcement of engagements, marriages, and football victories. Ironically, the one story that made the national press (aside from the announcement of the co-ordinate college) was the chapel protest. Enough! I leave you to your mead. God bless you all!

*L. R. Birns*
*Assistant Professor of International Relations.*

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## Durable Beauty

To the Editor:

From all indications, it seems that the only reason the East Campus was chosen as the site of the new student center is that it is the most practical place to put Mr. Bristol's building.

But why be practical? This campus is beautiful, spacious, and dolomitic, but certainly not practical. For 152 years Hamilton's administrators have been more influenced by the poetic than the pragmatic in planning additions and renovations on the Hill.

If we wanted functionary architecture, why should the stagnant dolomite quarry be opened each time the College puts up a new building? Why was the interior of the Chapel re-done at the cost of thousands of dollars? Remember, it is just as easy to be forced to attend a Victorian chapel as it is a colonial one.

No, if the administration wants to get functionary, let's go all out. The Student Center should be bright red brick, augmented by shiny aluminum trim, with a flashing neon sign atop the building proclaiming to all the world (namely Clinton) that this edifice is the "latest, most pragmatic and realistic creation of that great American architect, Edward Durable Stone."

*Michael C. Lang, '67*